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TWO TYPES OF TRANSCENDENTALISM IN AMERICA[1]

I. FRANCO-AMERICAN TYPE

THERE is a tradition that New England transcendentalism was "made in Germany." This tradition has been allowed to grow by a double default, both through the supineness of American scholars, and through the positive propaganda of German *Kultur*. It has remained for a Franco-American to dispose of the matter, by showing that the American transcendental movement, with its idealism and individualism, was but part of the greater movement of European romanticism. This was not pan-Germanic, but had its roots in the very characters of Emerson and Channing, of Ripley and Brownson; in the speculations of Coleridge and Carlyle; and especially in the eclecticism of Cousin, Jouffroy, and Constant. Common opinion, again, may assert that these groups—American, English, French—had their source and inspiration from beyond the Rhine, but that remains to be proved. M. Girard, to put it tersely, contends that there was an epidemic of emotionalism breaking out in the republic of letters, a kind of metaphysical measles—but not necessarily German measles. The endemic character of this movement is portrayed under a truly transcendental postulate, namely, a national soul belonging to each country.

The New England leaders had many points of agreement with the great German idealists, but if we add to the list Theodore Parker and Henry David Thoreau, Amos Bronson Alcott and Margaret Fuller, there is suggested a native strain, a peculiar virtue in the soil which fed the tree of transcendentalism. From this kind of speculative soil-analysis, then, one might learn what to expect in the way of a metaphysical crop. So Girard fitly begins his monograph with an introductory study of philosophic thought in America prior to the appearance of transcendentalism. The imigration into New

[1] William Girard, *Du transcendantalisme considéré essentiellement dans sa définition et ses origines françaises*, University of California Publications, Vol. 4, No. 3. Berkeley, 1916. Pp. 351–498. R. M. Wenley, *The Life and Works of George Sylvester Morris, A Chapter in the History of American Thought in the Nineteenth Century.* New York, The Macmillan Company, 1917. Pp. xv + 332.

England is called "*des hommes d'action et des hommes de Dieu.*" The Colonial college is described—and quite properly—as interested more in the evidences of design than the body-mind controversy; in the spiritual relations between man and God, than in the material explanations of man as a machine. But while the process of rationalizing was one-sided, that process led to a marked reaction against Puritan orthodoxy. The very preference for purposiveness was a sign of revolt against an inscrutable ruler, working in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. The deists, then, as rationalists, were veritable forerunners of the reasonable Emerson, yet it can hardly be held that the emotional element, which was so strong in the sage of Concord, was supplied before the day of triumphant deism with its cut and dried arguments. To intimate—as does the author—that the lacking element of sentiment was furnished as early as 1738 by the arrival of George Whitefield, the "revivalist," is going too far. The English evangelist influenced the subsoil of society rather than the upper strata. Read Charles Chauncy's *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England* and see how unseasonable that cool thinker considered the arguments and actions of the "hot" men.[2]

Girard misses the mark in intimating that there was anything "romantic" in the early eighteenth-century revivalism; he nevertheless offers a suggestive explanation for the later opposition to the French revolutionary romanticism. The wars of the great Emperor —diplomatic conflicts, the embargo against Napoleon—here is a new line of evidence for the Yankee dislike of a "Frenchified" philosophy. Another good point is made in showing how the Scottish philosophy of Dugald Stewart and Thomas Brown failed to satisfy the romantic impulses of the heart. So the generation which bridged the period between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, unable to return to the traditional Calvinistic dogma, disillumined as to the utopias promised by the French revolutionaries, apprehensive of the skeptical *cul-de-sac* of materialism—this generation was ready and eager for another and better philosophy. This was offered by the rising transcendentalism. By this is not meant the religious spiritualism of the Unitarians, which tended to grow more and more vague as time went on, but the real transcendentalism which, accurately speaking, had a new and fresh aspect supplied on the religious side by the writings of Madame de Staël, of Benjamin Constant, of Theodore Jouffroy, and on the philosophic by Coleridge, Cousin, and Carlyle, rather than by Kant, Fichte, and Schelling (p. 387).

[2] *Cf.* My chapter on "Early American Philosophers and Divines" in the *Cambridge History of American Literature,* Vol. 1, New York, 1917.

The author at this juncture brings forward his first critical contention, namely, that the failure to distinguish between the religious and philosophic phases of the New England movement has led the historians of transcendentalism to attribute to the Germans an exaggerated influence (p. 383, note 2). H. C. Goddard and the reviewer are here mentioned, but both of these, curiously enough, had meanwhile made his answer. Goddard's new account of Transcendentalism has just appeared in the *Cambridge History of American Literature.* My own account in the summary volume, *American Thought,* was evidently overlooked by the author.[3] In this were presented grounds for thinking that New England transcendentalism, as represented by Emerson, had other sources than Teutonic. Girard objects to making Emerson the soul and standard bearer of transcendentalism. If I have done that it is because Emerson's *Nature,* published in 1836, presented in the most compact form "the very soul of the machine." I confess, in that brief study, to having failed to appreciate the French contribution to the movement. This has been well supplied by the present author, who shows that the Gallic eclecticism was a prime incentive to the transcendental belief that, in the human soul, there exist certain intuitions, certain first causes of the entire religious and moral life, independent of all sensible experience and prior to all reason (p. 385). Channing and Ripley and Theodore Parker held these views, so did de Staël, Constant, and Cousin. The similarity between the two groups may be granted, but the crux of the problem is the priority of the *a priori.* When Channing is charged by Brownson with being "answerable for no small portion of the soul-worship which was for a time the fashionable doctrine of the metropolis," the question still remains, at what original fane was Channing first inspired with this worship? Was it German or French, or possibly that of the Scottish intuitional school? As to the first alternative, Girard offers new evidence. Such is the statement from *The Memorial History of Boston* that "long after French became a matter of course, the great German writers remained practically unknown on these shores."[4] This *History* has been too little consulted by the critics. It contains a mine of information as to the New England conscience and the rise of

[3] A similar misadventure has just befallen me regarding Girard. My article on "French Philosophy in America" was printed in the *Revue Philosophique,* November, 1917, only a short time before I discovered Girard's valuable contribution to the subject. And since writing this review there have appeared two more pertinent discussions: H. D. Gray, *Emerson, A Statement of New England Transcendentalism,* Stanford University, 1917; and Albert Schurz, *French Origins of American Transcendentalism, American Journal of Psychology,* Jan. 1918, Vol. XXIX., pp. 50–65.

[4] *Memorial History,* Vol. 3, p. 653.

transcendentalism, and its evidence is further confirmed by such contemporary reviewers as that of the *Christian Examiner* of 1831, who complains that in neglecting the literature of Germany, the Americans have followed the bad example of the English—"treasures of philosophy, history, poetry, and critic, speculative for the most part, having been sealed up from foreign eyes."[5] The proof from the periodicals is important and goes to push the date of borrowings from across the Rhine to a time after, not before, the Nov-Anglian cult of "the innate knowledge." Germany, it seems—and the evidence is cumulative—did not directly affect leaders like Channing and Emerson. With characteristic Yankee independence —when it came later to their reading the Teutonic originals—they claimed that Fichte and Schelling merely served to confirm what they already had in mind. Such conceit to the Germans may seem "*colossal,*" but Girard has cleverly suggested that these very leaders had other sources for their thought, sources of which they were, in a measure, unconscious. A generation before a German dictionary could be bought in Boston, the market was flooded with the works of the Scots and the colleges from Cambridge to South Carolina were filled with the text-books of Stewart and Brown, of Reid and Beattie. But this argument cuts two ways. To prove his central point—the preponderance of French over German influence—Girard is at pains to show how largely the scholars of Paris were indebted to their predecessors of Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Edinburg, Cousin being said to have adopted from Francis Hutcheson his conception of "the moral sense," and from Reid and Stewart his experimental method.

Intuition plus introspection—that which was once Gaelic soon became Gallic—such appears the argument of the author, an argument which seems to detract from his case rather than strengthen it. Now all this valuable material might have been used to a different issue, for it can be shown that the New England transcendentalism was "set" in its local mold before the advent of either French or German craftsmen. The French merely put the *ormolu* about the original vessel; the vessel itself was not made in France, nor in Germany, but was of British-American manufacture. In their historic order the materials were in part derived from Berkeley and his spiritual realism, from the Cambridge Platonists and their archetypes, and from the Lake School with its "spirit far more deeply interfused." Further proofs that the French finish came late is shown in Emerson's rather unfavorable opinion of Cousin—a mere eclectic method, he asserts, being too mechanical to catch such "a fly-away" as truth. Then, too, W. E. Channing, despite his admiration for Rousseau, expressed a certain hesitation as to the tendencies of

[5] Vol. 8, p. 75.

Gallic thought. Yet this by no means implies that, in fear of the French, the New Englanders went over to the Germans. Girard has collected some very illuminating quotations on this point. According to Margaret Fuller, "Kant was thought by evangelical divines to be more dangerous than any French novelist." According to Brownson no works of Goethe "are exempt from the charge of immoral tendency" (p. 404, note 26).

And the discounting of foreign influences may be carried further. While the attitude toward the Continentals was rather provincial, towards the British it was decidedly independent. As the author intimates, Coleridge loosened up the orthodox Calvinists, but had little influence on the transcendentalists, because they were already liberal. In fact they went much further than the transcendental talker of Highgate. At this turn an interesting point is made that Coleridge's obscurity of style could not obscure a certain attachment of his to the traditional Calvinistic doctrines. Indeed, as we take it, the contrast between the vague Coleridge and the precise Channing is typical. When the English rhapsodist concealed his real beliefs, the American rationalist exactly stated his points of disagreement with the old beliefs.

A like argument holds true in regard to German influences. In their attitude toward the early eighteenth-century system, Channing, Ripley, and Theodore Parker manifested the same critical spirit as did Kant toward the cold formalism of Wolff. Around their philosophies were drawn the black lines of dissent; these lines were bitten in like that of the etcher; they were not the indefinite pastel effects of the mere romanticist. This critical attitude is also exemplified in regard to Carlyle. Here Girard supplies the deficiencies of previous historians of transcendentalism by showing that the individualism of Emerson and Thoreau was not due to a blind hero-worship of the author of *Sartor Resartus*. Nor did the New Englanders get their idealism through the diffracting lenses of the Scotchman, and for three several reasons: Kant's system was declared "an absurdity" by Carlyle; Carlyle in turn was declared unintelligible by the Americans; while the latter, earlier in the century, had already received a diluted form of idealism through Cousin (pp. 410–411).

The problem of priority we shall take up subsequently, but the last contention as to the transcendentalist's kinship to the French rather than the German idealism is ingeniously upheld by another line of evidence. This is to the effect that, while the German metaphysics was counted too radical, the French furnished arguments to reconcile faith and reason, religion and science, the gospel and life (p. 470). The problem of the respective weights of foreign influences

is not a simple one. New England transcendentalism was evidently not made in Germany, nor France, nor Britain. As is so commonly thought, it was not a mere mechanical assembling of imported parts, but rather an organic growth, a native plant, fertilized indeed from abroad, but nevertheless rooted in the local soil. Yet even such considerations are not wholly correct. Our philosophic flora can not be divided into two classes, the imported and the indigenous. The problem is like one in comparative botany, where the plants of two divided continents possess resemblances due to the common ancestry of a remote age. So if Emerson appears akin to the Cambridge Platonists, it is because both hark back to the groves of the Academy; and if Channing be called the Fénelon of America, it is because the thinkers of Boston and of Cambrai were alike grounded in the ancient mysticism. Girard has performed a distinct service in pointing out these affinities. The influence, especially, of the French mystics, Fénelon, Pascal, and Madame Guyon, has been but slightly noticed outside of Quaker circles,[6] so at this point the part played by Madame de Staël is properly introduced. *De l'Allemagne* was almost a family text-book in America and its author an advance agent of the notion that there exists in man a special faculty, primitive, innate, by virtue of which, and without the aid of reason or sensible experience, one gains a knowledge of religious truth (p. 418).

The stage was set in America, yet the actors said their lines but haltingly, before French masters instructed them. Thus it is reported of Channing the elder that he made acquaintance with the master minds of Germany through the medium, first of Madame de Staël, and afterwards of Coleridge. The importance of the rôle of Gallic influence is further argued from the fact that de Staël obtained from Rousseau the notion of a special intuitive religious faculty, while, subsequently, Constant deduced from this the two kindred corollaries that the religious sentiment is universal, and that this sentiment goes through various progressive forms (p. 420). This tracing of the New England romanticism through various intermediances to its sources is of great significance. It may, however, be overdone, unless one keeps in mind that the reason the New Englanders were so sympathetic was because they themselves had been through the same experiences, and had undergone the same reactions. Like causes brought like effects. Rousseau was what he was because of Voltaire and the Encyclopædists, and Channing, because of the skepticism of Hume and the dry rationalism of Thomas Paine.

The comparative study of sources discounts the Teutonic influ-

[6] *Cf.* Rufus Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, 1909.

ences on transcendentalism; so does comparative chronology. The problem of priority I have undertaken elsewhere in a comparison of Emerson's *Nature* of 1836 with his early *Journals,* in order to show that he was but slightly affected by German thought in his main tenets.[7] Girard does the same thing for Channing through an examination of the current magazines. Such is a statement from the *Christian Examiner* of 1827 that Schiller and Goethe "are still unfamiliar in America . . . more exciting are the books of Constant and Jouffroy." And what holds for the poets of Germany holds the more for the philosophers. As a matter of fact, New England knew almost nothing of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling until the 60's. In the 30's its knowledge came by a double refractive process through English translations of French treatises. Thus the translations of Cousin by Lindberg in 1832 and by Caleb Henry in 1834 led Orestes Brownson to assert that "Germany reaches us only through France." This statement was made in 1837. The following year came Ripley's important *Specimens of Foreign Standard Literature,* consisting of translations of Cousin, Jouffroy, and Constant. And yet in spite of all this, French eclecticism, though it contained fragments of the high German idealism, was not accepted as a whole by the independent Yankees. As Ripley remarked, that which the transcendentalists borrowed from Cousin were the arguments rather than the system, for "the reign of authoritative dogmatic systems has never been firmly established over the mind of this nation: every exclusive faith has called forth a host of dissent."[8]

II. German-American Type

By marshalling such evidence, Girard had done great service in disposing of the fable of the preponderant influence of German philosophy upon New England transcendentalism. The later preponderance is another matter; after the Civil War, William T. Harris, in his *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* furnished a direct importing agency for Teutonism. Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel were read in the original, and through the discussions of the St. Louis Metaphysical Club, the translations in the *Journal,* and the subsequent lectures of Harris and his colleagues, at the Concord Summer School, New England was largely won over to the recent marked sympathy with the German way of thinking. Another valuable line of evidence that the East was inclined toward Teutonism by influences from the West is furnished by the life of George Sylvester Morris of Michigan. It was the well-known translator of

[7] *Cf. American Thought,* Chapter VI., section 2, "The Sources of Transcendentalism."

[8] *Specimens,* Vol. 1, pp. 29, 30.

Ueberweg who gave to the country, for the first time, an adequate historical method in philosophy. This method, learned in the 60's through study at Heidelberg and Berlin, furnished the necessary cosmopolitan touch to a previous provincialism. Hitherto, philosophy in America had been like religion, denominational—its aim to uphold this or that point of view, to follow some "guide of life" which was termed true at the expense of other systems. Even the transcendentalists were guilty of this. As we have just seen, they were eclectics of eclecticism itself, Emerson himself being wont to pick and choose from Occident or Orient whatever might be a confirmation to his own beliefs. About the date, then, of our political centennial, the country was ripe for a better method. This was furnished to a great extent by Morris who showed that the historic course of philosophy was an evolution, or rather a portrayal of various schools of speculations with whose divergencies it would be as absurd to quarrel as with the various schools of painting. But now, and perhaps for the first time, an American student was enabled to gain a view of a vast historical canvas, crowded with figures and all with their places in the composition. Of course there were dominating personalities. As in the case of Raphael's School of Hellas, there was a central figure—the master of those who thought. But as Aristotle was flanked on either side by the Pre-Socratics and by the Stoics, himself standing midway in the long line from the early physicists to the later eclectics, so in the modern canvas, Hegel was presented as the commanding figure, and yet even so as vitally related both to his predecessors and to those who might come after him.

A guide into historic vistas—such we take Morris to have been. His chief contribution was not in bolstering up a certain "Christian spiritualism," because Herbert Spencer and the "agnostics" counterbalanced that, but rather in gaining the broad outlook, and then imparting it to others. This gain was made at great pains, for Morris's early outlook was as narrow as his later method was comprehensive. Born in Vermont, he was bred in so strict a sect that he was scarcely affected by the New England transcendentalism of his day and generation. Surprising as it may seem, he does not appear to have been even aware of this "latest form of infidelity," but to have had a blind spot for that which lay to one side of the straight and narrow path of Puritanism. Philosophically, then, his early life was thin and meager. There was about as much body and color in it as in the weathered farmhouse in which he was born. This quality, or lack of quality, lasted on. Morris's personal philosophy strikes one as a thin wash of optimism, a vague water color where the tints have run on the absorbent background of the abso-

lute. It was not his to grasp the "thick crust of reality" as did some of his pragmatic pupils. As Wenley confesses, his "philosophical interests converged upon the highest human ideals, more or less to the exclusion of the order of nature. The positivist attitude, with all its implications, remained alien, even distasteful—one had almost said disreputable—to the end" (p. 180).

Morris's life, in other words, constituted a sort of unfinished Hegelian synthesis. There was the thesis of Puritanism, the antithesis of Teutonism—but never a resolution of the conflicting forces. It is argued by his biographer that a short life prevented this, but it looks rather as if Morris was a transitional thinker, who went through various phases, but never reached full fruition. One of these transitional phases was that experienced at Union Theological Seminary. Leaving the New England home, with "the impress of spiritual qualities," passing through an academy whose principal possessed a "sanctified intelligence," Morris entered Dartmouth at a time when Butler's *Analogy* was still used, but Paley's *Evidences* had been supplanted by Haven's *Mental Philosophy*. As a result of all this his undergraduate essays showed an "utter innocence of historical evidence and method." Inspired by the "family ideals" and by intense abolitionist principles, Morris next entered the northern army before Gettysburg, but being detailed upon detached service, his "fundamental standpoint" received no shocks. The transition, curiously enough, came in the New York Theological Seminary and that not so much from the teaching in the place, as from private meditations. Union had been founded, among other things, to provide a seminary "for men of moderate views . . . to stand aloof from all extremes of doctrinal speculations." Its staff evidently kept to that aim. This is clear from the fact that in Morris's reading lists, which ranged from Aristotle and Ackermann to Mill and Spencer, there is no reference to the French eclectics, though Cousin and Constant were being taught almost around the corner at the old University of the City of New York. As to Morris's two theological teachers, one hindered, the other helped his development. Shedd taught a kind of Coleridgian mysticism, yet not without Calvinistic trimmings. But Henry B. Smith realized his pupil's intellectual perplexity and advised him to forego the ministry and proceed to Europe. The family feared "lest German philosophy should destroy his religious faith" and, because of his extreme reticence, it is hard to judge if it did.

Wenley here offers a very interesting picture of the Germany of 1866—two generations ahead of the English-speaking world in its treatment of philosophical and theological problems and even further removed from the United States than from England (pp.

107 ff.). Thus at a time when Protestant preachers, who filled American chairs of philosophy, were still winning bubble reputations in the "free will" controversy, Vatake had rendered that quarrel meaningless a quarter of a century before. While Morris's *Diary* throws little light on the influence of his foreign teachers, a later article shows that Trendelenburg left the deepest mark, and that in regard to method. Here Morris contrasts American philosophy as so often fragmentary and superficial, as compared with "the grave, comprehensive, universal doctrine" of the historian, rather than the propagandist. Historical investigation in the spirit of "scientific objectiveness" became, therefore, the prime aim of the American scholar on his return to his own country. This was shown by his translation of Ueberweg's *History of Philosophy, from Thales to the Present Time,* a translation which Professor Dewey has pronounced superior to the original because its ambiguities in style and statement were corrected, its bibliography increased, and numerous accounts of the contemporary German philosophers added (p. 121). Despite this masterly translation, Morris did not at once obtain a chair of philosophy, but was obliged to mark time as professor of modern languages and literature at the University of Michigan.

At this point we make bold to point out a "certain weakness in the middle" of Professor Wenley's book. The account of Morris's New England education is interesting and that of his foreign sojourn important, but in describing his own habitat the biographer becomes another "sweet singer of Michigan." We are interested in the life and work of Morris as forming "a chapter in American thought," but with the university that gave him so tardy a recognition we are not especially intrigued. However, by a kind of clever camouflage Wenley makes out quite a case for that seat of learning, once known as the "Catholepestemiad," much as the Grand Rapids furniture people will make one a set of antique furniture to order. It is all very well for local consumption to refer to Morris's colleagues as, variously, a "pioneer chemist," a "protagonist of seminar instruction," the "most eminent quartette of legal teachers in the country," but this remarkable galaxy of Michigan "Argonauts" could not prevent Morris from resigning his chair of modern languages and accepting a lectureship at Johns Hopkins University. Wenley calls this an "episode" and says that Morris was disappointed by the lukewarmness of the Baltimore administration toward philosophy. He, nevertheless, mentions among Morris's pupils John Dewey and Joseph Jastrow and describes what were then new methods of teaching philosophy—the seminar and the Metaphysical Club, whose membership included Christine Ladd, Josiah Royce, and G. Stanley Hall. For former students at Hopkins this chapter opens

a delightful, though somewhat dangerous, topic, namely, the reason for the administration's alleged "lukewarmness toward philosophy." It is intimated that President Gilman desired to secure a "safe man" in philosophy and that at the same time he was blind to the tendencies of "the scientific anti-philosophy" then prevalent in the place. Dr. Gilman, it is true, was a graduate of Yale in its Cambrian period, but, if I may be pardoned a personal reminiscence, I have heard from his own lips the story of the objection of the Baltimore clergyman to the proposed lectures by Huxley on the ground that "Huxley and God could not be in the same room together." As to this debatable topic, however, Wenley offers an ingenious explanation: "Johns Hopkins University and its president in their way, Morris in his, and many others were caught in one of those streams of tendency that are no respecters of persons. Science, at the flood of the Darwinian theory, was sweeping everything before it, and philosophy had become tolerable only as an introduction to scientific method. It was unlucky for Morris, at the moment that systematic philosophy—the only philosophy worth the name *wissenschaftlich*—had made but little impression in the United States, and that, as a result, his critical attitude towards the premature generalizations associated with science was taken for a reaction to Protestant dogmatics; he was supposed to be essentially inimical to scientific research, not merely in physical, but in humanistic affairs. Naturalists did not like his "transcendentalism," historians and economists deemed him a "romantic." Original research was taken to imply measurement and numbering of "objective" things; the extensive preliminary requirements for successful advance in philosophy were not provided or, at least, not emphasized and, as is altogether likely, had not been understood" (p. 149). Morris may have been a misunderstood genius, yet in strict accordance with his very historical method, his biographer should have no quarrel with those who were antipathetic to the idealism for which he stood. As Stanley Hall remarked, Morris, early in the 80's, "had developed a good way toward the Hegelian position, and so we did not agree" (p. 153).

It has been said that the Hegelian habit, once contracted, can never be cured. This seems true of Morris who "innocently accepts the transcendental order" and apparently remains in the pre-scientific stage. So he was not only sympathetic with the British Hegelians, and tended to view the antithesis between the noumenal and the phenomenal as if it were fixed, but also insisted upon an inevitable collision between natural science and spiritual aspiration (p. 243). It would be interesting to speculate what would have happened to Morris had he accepted the chair of philosophy at Cor-

nell where Andrew D. White portrayed the *Warfare of Science against Theology.* The outcome of the latter work was to elevate science at the expense of religion; whereas Morris disparaged science to bolster up religion. His attacks on the "metaphysics of materialism" appear, if not antiquated, at any rate overdrawn. But there was a certain excuse for this. The tremendous system of Spencer was one that would appeal to the public, as was shown by the financial success of the synthetic philosophy in America; but the easy agnosticism of this cloud-compelling Zeus must have been peculiarly irritating to one who was by nature vitally interested in the apologetics of spiritualism. It was then as obvious as a litmus paper test to expect a specific reaction in Morris's mind when he undertook the Ely lectures at Union Theological Seminary. This foundation, whose primary aim was to discuss "the nature and need of a Revelation," dated from 1865, a time when pietism and rationalism were at a draw. Yet eighteen years afterwards, despite the spread of Darwinian naturalism,[9] Morris could make bold to assert that "the human intelligence . . . has for its first or immediate object, the physical universe, as a language, the true reading of which brings it to the present knowledge of the divine Word, as the truth, or absolute causal reality of the universe."[10]

All this "defining the Absolute for a dollar," as Wenley suggests, shows two things—the essentially theosophical and mystical nature of Morris, and his ignorance of positive science and of its methods. It might also explain a third point—the recoil of some of Morris's pupils away from high idealism towards the humbler methods of pragmatism and neo-realism. Since Morris's day something has happened in American philosophy, something came to an end, namely, the metaphysics of supernaturalism.[11] Or, as James would put it, we have overpassed the standpoint of "cold storage truths." To us then, there hangs about Morris's metaphysics that stale air of sanctity often found in the parlor of a New England farmhouse, a room which represents in itself a "closed universe," without fresh air and sunlight—a room whose faded photographs, wax flowers, and hair-cloth sofa all have their analogies with the pietistic Hegelian's unreal entities, stiff formulæ, and slippery syllogisms.

WOODBRIDGE RILEY.

VASSAR COLLEGE.

9 *Cf.* Morris's *British Thought and Thinkers,* Chapter XII., Chicago, 1880, where he calls Spencer a mere Pre-Socratic.

10 P. 275. Also for a recent description of this Neo-Hegelian ideal, *Cf.* G. H. Sabine "Philosophical and Scientific Specialization," *Philosophical Review,* January, 1917, p. 19.

11 *Cf.* W. T. Bush, *Constructive Intelligence,* this JOURNAL, Vol. 14, p. 505.